

Image Management Software Options

Reviewed by Velma Potash, Data Manager for Cape Cod National Seashore

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Options for Custom Software

1) Access System

Advantages: No additional purchases of software except possibly a low cost add-in like polybytes®.

Disadvantages: Labor intense development. Poor visual presentation compared to other systems. Image management functions like resizing are not available directly.

2) Custom FileMaker System Distributed Park Wide

Advantages: FileMaker is handles images better than access. FileMaker systems have been successfully developed for a number of large libraries and Natural Resource image databases (i.e. Harvard's Insect Species Vouchers). Low cost database compared with Oracle and SQL server. Successful examples of web-based systems are available for design ideas.

Disadvantages: Volatile software market makes this product riskier than Access. FileMaker requires more investment in time and software than Access.

3) Custom Database using another database.

Open source databases could be used as back ends but would still require considerable development efforts. Systems would require ongoing maintenance

Options for off the Shelf Image Management Software

- 1) **Low cost share ware.** Leading vendors appear to be ThumbsPlus® by Cerious and Imatch® by Photools. (Picassa, ADCsee, Adobe Photo Alum and others are, in my opinion, not as suitable. A second opinion would be appreciated.)

Advantages: Low Cost - between \$300 and \$600 for a small Park. Some customization and scripting is available. Parks may be able to share experience and scripts. Easy to use.

Disadvantage: Corporate stability is questionable. They are not multi-user systems. Low security. Does not help with Office file management as well as image management.

Options for off the Shelf Image Management Software Continued

- 1) **Mid-Range document and image management solutions.** Canto Cumulus and Extensis Portfolio seem to be the lead cases.

Advantages: Fairly low cost – \$2500 - \$5000. These are robust systems for managing and viewing image files. Some capability to catalogue and manage other digital assets like spreadsheets is also possible. Companies have large staff to support bug fixes and development of future releases. True client server systems.

Disadvantages: Higher cost. If you want true database interoperability then you have to pay for add-ons and/or database licenses. (Text file import and export is available. Scripts for importing Access database tables are available for Cumulus at low cost.)

2)Image Portal Solutions – NetExposure and WhereMedia.

Advantages: Potentially lower costs when there are more than about 15 seats. Low cost distribution over the internet. Allows remote access and updates to image files and folders.

Disadvantages: Limited user interfaces compared with pure management software. Corporate security may not be as high as for the mid-range DAM solutions. Requires a web server. Harder to do the systems administration.

- 3) **High End Web Solutions** – Luna Insight® and others. These products starting at about \$15,000 may be cheaper than in-house development of systems. These systems are similar to our own NPSfocus.

Image Management Software Requirements and Considerations

Core Requirements:

1. Ability to create custom metadata fields.
2. Ability to export custom metadata (text).
3. Ability to import custom metadata (text).
4. Ability to read EXIF and IPTC data.
5. Easy to use. Logical and well organized user interface.
6. Allows easy tracking and maintenance of file structures.
7. Batch renaming and resizing of image files.
8. Ability to define more than one collection in a database.

Valued Features:

1. Custom metadata can be exported in Access or XML formats.
2. Custom metadata can be imported from Access or XML formats.
3. DD/DVD archiving capability.
4. Ability to modify and export custom EXIF, IPTC data.
5. Conformance with new Adobe image and metadata standards.
6. The ability to create more than one set of metadata for each image.
7. Supports all file formats including MS Office files to support document management as well as image file management.
8. Role access for security.
9. Ability to mark and restrict access to copyrighted material.
11. Ability to export metadata in an XML format to NPSfocus.
12. Ability to link the image database to other databases.
13. Scripting capability for customizing output and input.
14. True multi-user database system.

Requirements Specific to Intranet/Internet Hosts:

1. Product interfaces well with web development tools.
2. Can be incorporated directly into intra/internet sites.
3. Roles access and security features are robust.
4. Copy write protection is available for selected images.
5. Fairly easy installation.
6. Low cost support software requirements (i.e. MySQL vs. SQL Server).

Show Stoppers:

1. None or very limited custom metadata creation.
2. Inability to import text format metadata.

Other Considerations:

1. Low cost for purchase and installation.
2. Company should be financially stable to ensure product will keep up with technology.
3. Technical support should be available for bugs.
4. Consistency across the park system is important. Tools to link Access or NPSfocus to the image databases could be developed if we are consistent.

Software Comparisons

Requirement	PhotoTools	ThumbsPlus	Portfolio	Cumulus	NetExposure	WhereMedia	LunaInsight
Custom Metadata Creation	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		☺
Exports Text Metadata	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		☺
Imports Text Metadata	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		☺
Reads EXIF and IPTC	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		☺
Easy to use	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		☺
File Management	☺		☺	☺	☺		
Batch Reprocessing	☺	☺	☺	☺			
CD/DVD Archiving			☺	☺			
Multiple Collections	☺	☺	☺	☺			
Access or XML Exporting	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		☺
Access Data Importing	☺	☺	☺	☺			
XML Data Importing	☺	☹	☹	☺			
Modifies EXIF, IPTC, XMP	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		
Multiple Metadata Def's			☺	☺	☺		
Supports Office Docs	☹	☹	☹	☺	☺		
Role Access	☹	☹	☹	☺	☺		☺
Copyrights or Watermarks	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺		
Links to other databases	☺	☺	☹	☹			
Built in scripting	☺	☹	☺	☺			
Multi-user systems	☹	☹	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Low Cost	☺ \$500	☺ \$500	☹ \$3500	☹ \$3500	☹ \$3000	☹ \$10K	☹ \$15K
Corporate Stability	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Tech Support	☹	☹	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Supports Websites			☺		☺	☺	☺

